

RCHHC Meeting Minutes, 03/11/2026, 7pm Location Firestorm Bookstore

Attendees:

Steve Rasmussen	Larry Williamson	Meaghan Collins
Liberti Valance	Sally Grau	Drew Ball
Claire Siegel	Susan Jensen	Nalin Taeja
Lew Gelfond	Tim Yanasak	Devin Chapman
Laura Yanasak	Kurt Schroeder	

A. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS: Steve Rasmussen, RCHHC Chair

Attendees went around the room and introduced themselves and identified where they lived in the neighborhood.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: from 01/14/2026 meeting

Approval was unanimous.

C. NEW BUSINESS

Neighborhood Services' Trey Irby could not attend but sent an email with announcements from the city. View [here](#). Announcements include:

- Riverfront Parks Recovery
- March 21 NC Arbor Day Workshop at the Arboretum- includes free trees and admission is free but registration is required
- Resilience Hub Mapping Project.

1. Elections:

Devin Chapman, as the vice chair, conducted the election and voting.

Sally Grau was nominated for treasurer. Voting was conducted and votes were unanimous to elect Sally as new treasurer.

Steve and Victoria were nominated to continue another 2 year term. A vote was conducted and the vote was unanimous approving another term.

2. Property taxes:

Discussion about the new property tax assessments was conducted. Victoria pointed out the site simplicity asheville <https://simplicity.ashevillenc.gov/> can be used to view "comparables" to identify sales nearby to your property. Victoria additionally suggested the site's comparables were not exactly "comparable"!

Drew mentioned that the buncombe county commissioners do consider the new assessments with budget needs. It is likely they will adjust the tax rate for property taxes proportional to the

assessment changes. The Assessor's Office staff has been increased to address issues where previously there was disparity in assessed values. Drew offered to answer any questions by email: drew.ball@buncombecounty.org.

Sally shared that the Chairperson of the Malvern Hills Neighborhood Association reached out to her, asking to combine our 2 neighborhoods for a joint meeting, while inviting the Asheville City Tax Assessor Office to present the revaluation process and answer any questions. It was agreed for Sally to arrange this meeting with Malvern Hills NA. The meeting will be communicated through our email list. Stay tuned for when this is scheduled. It must be before April 7.

Chair Steve Rasmussen described a proposal he is advocating to Asheville City officials, suggesting property-tax discounts to homes and other urban property owners who preserve natural greenspaces – such as urban forest, pollinator habitat, streambanks – critical to Asheville’s environmental sustainability. Steve described that homeowners can create a conservation easement but unfortunately, small property owners are discouraged from doing this. The city already does this with LUGI (land use incentive grant) for developers. See the proposed letter [here](#) and on our web site.

Discussion ensued with Tim asking about incentivising to keep green spaces when homeowners might subdivide their property. Tim didn't think the preservation addresses the “affordability” issue. Also, he thinks that our tax dollars are paying for infrastructure for new development outside our neighborhood and any infill in the neighborhood uses the same infrastructure. Steve pointed out that there is research that shows that subdividing a property will increase property values on surrounding properties and produce “gentrification”.

Larry suggested this discussion needs to steer towards the obvious place for infill and additional housing development which is the adjacent Patten Ave. corridor. From the French Broad River, westward. He also thought we should hear more of the property tax reevaluation discussion.

Tim added that the Patton corridor could be considered scar on our neighborhood, and is appropriate for needed housing and business renewal.

Claire suggested that citizens attend a Board of Adjustment meeting to learn about zoning, noting that much of the Board’s membership are professional developers. She also asked about the conflict between encouraging in-fill and Steve’s proposal for preserving greenspace. Steve answered that there is congruence in that policy.

Libertie mentioned that they learned of the Emma area of West Asheville working to create low income homeownership opportunities for the neighborhood in building single family homes and creating mobile home parks that the occupants own the home and the lot- very different from current mobile home parks where the owner of the lot can sell and displace the occupant. They mentioned the cooperation of the neighborhood. To check out their program on the website: www.poderemma.org

Devin is a certified property appraiser. He is getting a lot of calls. People think with the new assessment that might have doubled, that does not mean the taxes will double.

D. OLD BUSINESS:

E. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Time expired that limited updates from these committees:

1. Plan on a Page Committee

2. C.A.N. Committee- Steve shared that the CAN organization has supported the Five Points neighborhood to keep the UNCA woods. CAN asked Steve to compose a letter to the editor on behalf of CAN with this statement.

3. School Committee - Victoria shared that the LSH Peace garden is having a garden work day, cob oven pizza and potluck on March 21. See the flyer [here](#) and on our website.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Clair mentioned that there is a Repair Cafe (household and sewing repairs) next at Haywood Community College on 3/14, thereafter at Weaverville community center on 3/19. The schedule is [here](#) and on our web page.

Libertie reminded the group that Firestorm Bookstore sponsors a neighborhood cleanup on the first Saturday of the month at 10 AM -meet in front of the Bookstore. Supplies provided by GreenWorks. All community members are welcome to join-in.

Party Note: Devin announced that the Neighborhood Street Party is scheduled for May 30! Victoria mentioned that some businesses in our neighborhood requested permission to be present with a booth. Devin said yes they are welcomed to apply. Stay tuned for more information.

Adjourned at 8:08 Next meeting is May 13 and weather permitting we will meet on Devin Chapman's back porch.